

reaffirm their commitment to a rich and dynamic Baltic-American partnership for the 21st century.

The Partners view their partnership in the areas of political, economic, security, defense, cultural, and environmental affairs as contributing to closer ties between their people and facilitating the full integration of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania into European and transatlantic structures.

In order to further strengthen these ties, the Partners will establish a Partnership Commission chaired at the appropriately high level to evaluate common efforts. This Commission will meet once a year or as needed to take stock of the Partnership, assess results of bilateral consultations on economic, military and other areas, and review progress achieved towards meeting the goals of this Charter.

In order to better reflect changes in the European and transatlantic political and security environment, signing Partners are committed regularly at the highest level to review this agreement.

**William J. Clinton**  
President  
United States of America

**Lennart Meri**  
President  
Republic of Estonia

**Guntis Ulmanis**  
President  
Republic of Latvia

**Algirdas Brazauskas**  
President  
Republic of Lithuania

Washington D.C.,  
January 16, 1998

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this agreement. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Statement on the Appointment of  
Senator John Breaux as Chairman of  
the National Bipartisan Commission  
on the Future of Medicare**  
*January 16, 1998*

I am pleased to join with Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott and House Speaker Newt Gingrich in announcing the appointment of

Senator John Breaux (D-LA) as Chairman of the National Bipartisan Commission on the Future of Medicare.

In addition, I am grateful that Representative Bill Thomas (R-CA) has agreed to become Administrative Chair, working with the Chairman on this important Commission.

Over the past 5 years, we have strengthened and modernized the Medicare system by providing Americans with more choice and preventative care, reducing fraud and waste within the system, and extending the life of the Trust Fund for more than a decade.

Despite these advances, there is more work to do to ensure that Medicare stays strong and solvent for the generations to come.

I look forward to working with the Commission and to receiving their analysis of and recommendations for the future challenges facing the Medicare program.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**The President's Radio Address**  
*January 17, 1998*

Good morning. Today I want to talk about the steps we must take to protect our children and the public health from one of the greatest threats they face—tobacco. For years, tobacco companies have sworn they do not market their deadly products to children, but this week disturbing documents came to light that confirm our worst suspicions.

For years one of our Nation's biggest tobacco companies appears to have singled out our children, carefully studying their habits and pursuing a marketing strategy designed to prey on their insecurities in order to get them to smoke.

Let me read you two of the most startling lines from an internal tobacco company presentation proposing a marketing campaign targeted at children as young as 14. Quote, "Our strategy becomes clear: direct advertising appeal to younger smokers." Younger smokers, this document says also, and I quote, "represent tomorrow's cigarette business." The message of these documents is all too clear: Marketing to children sells cigarettes.

Today I want to send a very different message to those who would endanger our children: Young people are not the future of the tobacco industry; they are the future of America. And we must take immediate, decisive action to protect them.

We know that every day 3,000 young people will start smoking and 1,000 of them will die prematurely due to tobacco-related disease. We know that 90 percent of adults who smoke—90 percent—began using tobacco before the age of 18. That is why, starting in 1995, we launched a historic nationwide effort with the FDA to stop our children from smoking before they start, reducing their access to tobacco products and severely restricting tobacco companies from advertising to young people. The balanced budget agreement I signed into law last summer includes a \$24 billion children's health initiative, providing health coverage to up to 5 million uninsured children, paid for by tobacco taxes.

But even these efforts are not enough to fully protect our children from the dangers of smoking. To do that we need comprehensive, bipartisan legislation. Last September I proposed five key elements that must be at the heart of that legislation. First, and most important, it must mandate the development of a comprehensive plan to reduce teen smoking with tough penalties for companies that don't comply. Second, it must affirm the FDA's full authority to regulate tobacco products. Third, it must include measures to hold the tobacco industry accountable, especially for marketing tobacco to children. Fourth, it must include concrete measures to improve the public health, from reducing secondhand smoke to expanding smoking cessation programs to funding medical research on the effects of tobacco. And finally, it must protect tobacco farmers and their communities from the loss of income caused by our efforts to reduce smoking by young people.

If Congress sends me a bill that mandates those steps, I will sign it. My administration will do all it can to ensure that Congress passes this legislation. In September I asked the Vice President to build bipartisan support for the legislation, and he has held forums

all across our country to focus public attention on the issue.

In a few weeks, my balanced budget proposal will make specific recommendations on how much the tobacco industry should pay and how we can best use those funds to protect the public health and our children. Today I want to let Members of Congress know that our administration will sit down with them anytime, anywhere to work out bipartisan legislation.

Reducing teen smoking has always been America's bottom line and always our administration's bottom line. But to make it the tobacco industry's bottom line, we have to have legislation. This is not about politics. This is not about money. It is about our children.

The 1998 Congress should be remembered as the Congress that passed comprehensive tobacco legislation, not the Congress that passed up this historic opportunity to protect our children and our future.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:50 a.m. on January 16 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 17.

### **Statement on Representative Louis Stokes' Decision Not To Seek Reelection**

*January 18, 1998*

Throughout his illustrious career in the United States Congress, Representative Louis Stokes has been a champion of America's finest values. He has worked tirelessly to better the lives of our children and our veterans and has stood steadfast in an effort to bring our country together amid all of our diversity to build a stronger community.

Representative Stokes has been a true advocate for the people of Cleveland and for all Americans who support giving people the tools they need to make the most of their own lives. He has served our country from the bottom of his heart, and his retirement after three decades of dedicated service will be a loss felt by all.